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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Board of Fisheries

of South Carolina

1914

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REPORT.

To His Excellency, Richard I. Manning, Governor, and to the General Assembly of South Carolina:

We have the honor to submit this, our annual, report. Herein may be found facts relating to the work of the Board of Fisheries, a statement of the revenue derived from business done, and of expenses incurred for the year 1914.

The industry under our supervision from which the State derives the largest revenue is the oyster industry. The year 1914 has been the most disastrous for the packers of oysters since the creation of this department. The months of January, February and March were very severe on oysters, the canneries operating but ten and twelve days a month during this period, and the intense cold the latter part of February paralyzed the industry and destroyed thousands of bushels of oysters. The month of April there was a scarcity of oysters, notwithstanding the fact that there have been planted by the different canneries in the State between one hundred and twenty-five and one hundred and seventy-five thousand of bushels of shell each year for the past six years.

At the opening of the season this fall the prices were so very low that the packers were afraid to operate. Last season they could close contracts for their entire output at 80 cents (standard size), whereas, this season the best price obtainable for the same goods is but 62½ and 65 cents, and they are unable to get any contracts for even this low price. At present there are a few canneries operating, who are doing so at a loss in order to keep their regular labor together. With the price of most foodstuff advanced, the price of oysters has been the reverse.

After trying for several years this department has at last succeeded in leasing grounds for the planting of seed oysters. We have advertised in the Norfolk, Baltimore and Charleston papers trying to get lessees for these grounds, and this year have leased one thousand one hundred and thirty-five acres in Beaufort county, where thirty thousand bushels of seed oysters have been planted. In the course of a year these seed oysters will be of marketable size, and will, in our opinion, be the commencement of the shucked oyster industry in South Carolina.

As the oyster beds are being worked very little at present there is an abundance of oysters, and judging from present market prices there will be a greater supply, as we believe most of the canneries will suspend operations.

Notwithstanding weather conditions, poor market prices, etc., our revenue from this source has decreased but little from the previous year.

The shad season for 1914 has been better than the season of 1913; there were more fish taken, and the prices were fairly good for the fishermen, and with a larger number of fish taken naturally the revenue from this source is greater than the preceding year. The cause of the increase in the number of fish shipped from this State, in our opinion, was due to an innovation to the shad industry of South Carolina. The use of anchor nets was started off the Georgetown coast. These nets are anchored in the ocean and the catch from these nets was good.

The fish that are caught in the anchor nets are not all what are known as "Georgetown shad." There have been quite a number of "roe shad" caught in these nets that are not as large as a medium size buck fish, and we do not think these fish ever come into Georgetown waters.

The sturgeon fishery reopened after a closed period of six years. The catch in the waters south of Georgetown was not as good as had been anticipated, but in the waters near Georgetown the catch of sturgeon was very good. There were no large fish taken, but a good medium size fish. The price of sturgeon roe and meat was very good, and the fishermen were benefited by the reopening. This coming season will be open for the taking of sturgeon, and we will then have another closed period of three years. There is a general kick registered by the fishermen against this closed season for three years, as it is claimed the sturgeon, being a migratory fish, they are caught by our next door neighbor, while the South Carolina fishermen have to sit with their arms folded and see the fish go by.

Our revenue from this source for the season was six hundred and eighty dollars.

There were more clam and terrapin shipped last year than in 1913. The Northern market prices govern the shipment of clam and terrapin, and the prices being low the shipments were not as large as could have been. Our revenue from this source has also increased.

We are glad to report a larger revenue from this department than the report of 1913.

We append hereto a statement of the revenue derived from the industries under our supervision and of expenses incurred in the enforcement of the laws.

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COUNTIES.	Canned Oysters.	Shucked Oysters.	Shad.	Clam.	Terrapin Tax.	Terrapin License.	Sturgeon Dealers' License.	Sturgeon Net License.	Nonresident License.	Fines.	Rent of Oyster Grounds.	Totals.
Beaufort	\$3,155.742	\$ 262.41	\$ 157.89	\$ 48.85	\$ 150.05	\$ 25.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 180.18	\$ 4,255.122
Charleston	1,029.67	2.32	319.09	178.10	184.40	50.00	50.00	40.00	.....	.....	.....	1,853.58
Georgetown	37.81	7.03	1,727.96	364.71	.....	.....	50.00	270.00	.....	.....	.....	2,457.51
Colleton .....	.....	.....	1,106.94	.....	37.50	.....	50.00	20.00	.....	.....	.....	1,214.44
Horry	51.885	2.78	14.47	251.40	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	320.535
Totals	\$4,275.107	\$ 274.54	\$3,326.35	\$ 843.06	\$ 371.95	\$ 75.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 180.18	\$ 10,101.187

EXPENSES.

Paid from appropriation of \$7,200:

Salaries of chairman, inspectors and helpers.....	\$5,580 00
Office expenses	206 00
Insurance	73 50
Expenses of maintaining and running launches and necessary expenses of the service.....	1,251 91
Paid by the Comptroller General from appropriation of \$400.00 (General Appropriation Bill) for printing, tax, stamps, blanks, etc., for Board of Fisheries.....	356 51
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Total amount of expenses.....	\$7,467 92

RECAPITULATION.

Aggregate amount of appropriation.....	\$ 7,600 00
Total amount of expenses.....	7,467 92
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Aggregate amount of unexpended balance.....	\$ 132 08
Total amount of revenue for 1914.....	10,101 18.7
Total amount of expenses for 1914.....	7,467 92
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Net revenue for 1914.....	\$ 2,633 26.7

Respectfully submitted,

W. L. HARRIGAN, Chairman;
J. C. BAILEY,
L. C. A. ROESSLER,
Board of Fisheries of South Carolina.